Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY PRICE TEN CENTS

BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

VOLUME II NEW YORK, MAY, 1907 NUMBER 5

AN ALTARPIECE DEDICATED TO SAINT ANDREW ATTRIBUTED TO LUIS BORRASSÁ

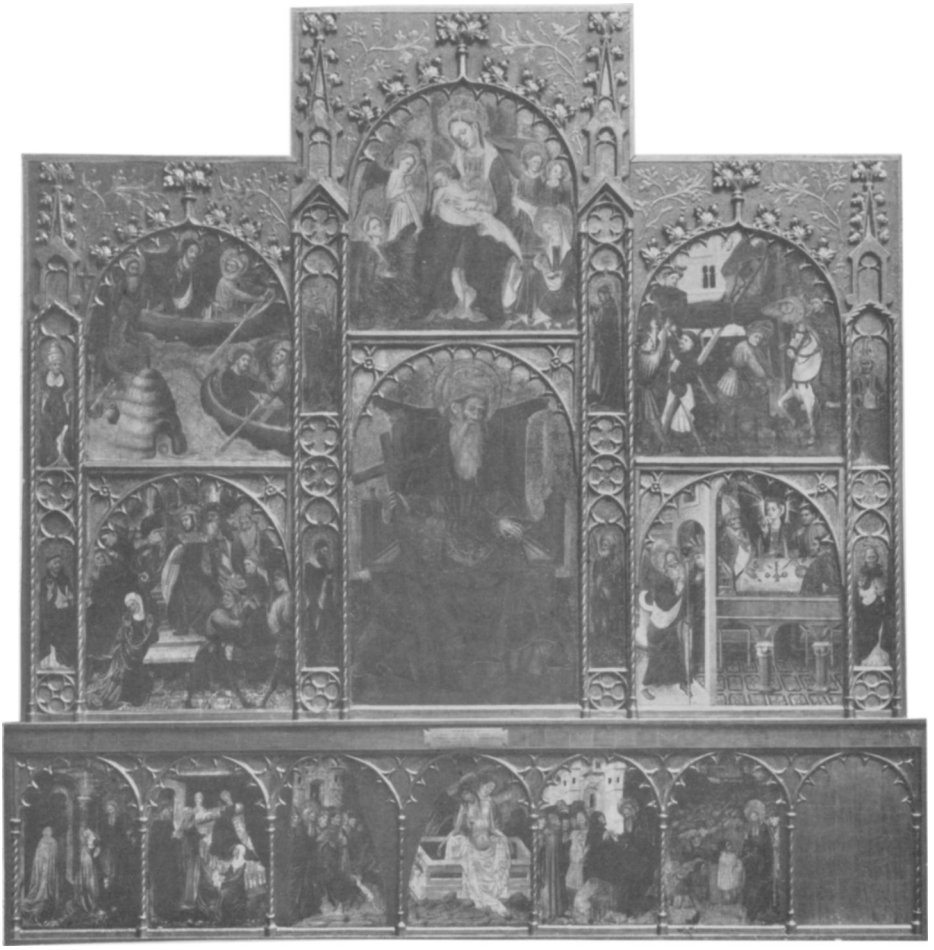
DETAIL FROM THE ALTARPIECE

THE Metropolitan Museum has now on view two and perhaps three striking examples of a school which was till recently ignored by historians of art, namely, the Catalan school. The researches recently published by Señor Sanpere y Miquel in his book *Los Cuatrocentistas Catalanes* * have been a revelation to connoisseurs of a flourishing school of painting existing in and around Barcelona throughout the fifteenth century. The origins and development of this school are quite distinct from those of the Spanish School proper. This is indeed to be expected from the fact that the civilization of Catalonia was itself distinct from the Spanish and that the Catalans looked rather to Provence and Italy than to Spain in their racial, political and social sympathies. To this day the Catalans speak a language more allied to Provençal than to Spanish and it is not therefore surprising to find that the origin of this interesting and hitherto obscure school must be traced to Avignon. There under the régime of the Pope, Simone Martini of Sienna inaugurated a style the effects of which were felt widely throughout France and the Limousin countries. The precursors of the Catalan School clearly derived their inspiration from Simone and Siennese forms, Siennese technique and to some extent Siennese color predominate in their works till well on into the fifteenth century. So close indeed was this affiliation that certain pictures now relegated to the school of the Limousin district have passed hitherto as Siennese. This is the case with the part of a polyptych No. 45 with a figure of St. Giles and two subsidiary scenes which though long in the possession of the Museum, was exhibited for the first time last April. This picture had always borne on a label at the back the attribution "Siennese School" and so close is it to certain Siennese works that only after much hesitation was it tentatively ascribed to the School of Avignon. To that school in a sense it belongs, but probably only in so far as the Catalan School itself derives from Avignon, for in all probability this picture comes from an atelier in Barcelona closely allied to that which produced our recent acquisition, the altarpiece of St. Andrew.

Señor Sanpere y Miquel's book has brought to light several artists who if not of the first rank when compared with the great names of Italy and Flanders yet

* Los Cuatrocentistas Catalanes; Historia de la Pintura en Cataluna en el Siglo XV, por S. Sanpere y Miguel. Barcelona, 1906. 2 vol. Octavo.

deserve to be recorded as distinct landmarks in the history of art. The first of these is Luis Borrassá, whose dated altarpieces at Vich and Manresa show that he existence but they show an artist who, following the main lines of Siennese trecento art in the larger compositions, gives rein to a quite individual and original



ALTARPIECE DEDICATED TO SAINT ANDREW
ATTRIBUTED TO LUIS BORRASSÁ

flourished in the early years of the fifteenth century. We have indeed notices of retablos painted by him from 1396 up to 1424. Of these only a few are still in fancy in the smaller subsidiary scenes. Here we find faces with an air of actuality altogether foreign to the great style of the Italians of the time. Indeed in this re-

ST. ANDREW, THE CENTRAL PANEL
FROM THE ALTARPIECE ATTRIBUTED TO LUIS BORRASSÁ

spect this local and comparatively sequestered school may be considered to be actually in advance of contemporary Italian art, still conscious as that was of the great academic tradition of the fourteenth century. Certainly one would rarely find in Italian cassone pieces before 1430 anything so actual, so much in touch with contemporary life as are the small panels in our altarpiece.

The altarpiece itself comes from the Church of Perpignan. This is so near to the Catalan border that there is nothing surprising in finding its inhabitants ordering their retablo from the prolific ateliers of Barcelona. It is to be hoped, however, that documentary research will throw further light on the precise history of this work. Meanwhile the attribution to Luis Borrassá himself may perhaps be accepted though not with absolute certainty. Our picture has indeed a close affinity with the altarpiece of St. John the Baptist in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris which is accepted by Señor Sanpere y Miquel on internal evidence as Borrassá's; but it must be remembered that our experience of this school is still very recent, that our eyes have hardly yet become accustomed to discern subtle differences amid the general likenesses of style and that the records reveal a whole society of artists of whose works we have no precise knowledge. In the central figures our altarpiece seems below Borassá's standard, while in the delicacy of color and the vivacity of the narrative style displayed in the smaller scenes there is nothing as yet known in Catalan art of the early fifteenth century which surpasses our example. In any case it is one of the best and most typical specimens of an interesting phase of early Renaissance painting.

While the altarpiece of St. Andrew represents thus admirably the great movement of Catalan art at the opening of the fifteenth century which is associated with the name of Borrassá another altarpiece lent by Mr. William M. Laffan illustrates no less splendidly its development in the latter half of that century. For this period Señor Sanpere y Miquel has revealed a whole family of artists who have left a group of works marked by a distinct style. This is the family of Vergos of whom no less than five are known as painters. The greatest of these is Pablo whose works are marked by a singular dignity of design and a peculiar pale grey tone of color. Mr. Laffan's altarpiece appears to be too positive in color and too accentuated in its dramatic interpretation to be the work of Pablo and I should ascribe it, though with the same reservations that I made above, to Jaime Vergos II.

R. E. F.

THE LAZARUS BEQUEST

IT is with special gratification that the Trustees of the Museum record the bequest of the late Mrs. Amelia B. Lazarus, consisting of twenty thousand dollars, to be applied, with all interests which may accrue, to the purchase of works of art by American artists, and of a part of her own collection, consisting of nine pictures.

Mrs. Lazarus's gifts during the period of her connection with the Museum, as a Fellow in Perpetuity, like those of other members of her family, have been numerous, comprising collections of old silver, gold ornaments, and porcelain; but the benefaction with which her name will always be most closely associated is the gift, which she, with her daughter, Miss Emilie Lazarus, made of the sum of twenty-four thousand dollars for the establishment of the fund known as "The Jacob H. Lazarus Traveling Scholarship Fund." The value of this scholarship is too well known to be gone into at length at this time; it is fitting, however, that it should be pointed out that the service which Mrs. Lazarus has rendered in this, her last gift to the Museum, is consistently in line with her enthusiastic and strong interest in American art expressed in wise action. Mrs. Lazarus's name can never be forgotten by those who study the growth of the art of painting in this country, nor by those who understand the part which the Museum plays in this development.